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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/222,554	12/29/1998	VORA V. SANJAY	2207/5939	3007

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EXAMINER

HUYNH, CONG LAC T

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2178

DATE MAILED: 04/18/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/222,554

Applicant(s)

SANJAY ET AL.

Examiner

Cong-Lac Huynh

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 February 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 and 13-25 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 and 13-25 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION


1. This action is responsive to communications: appeal brief filed on 2/26/06 to the application filed on 12/29/98.
2. Claims 1-9, 13-25 are pending in the case. Claims 1-3, 16, 20-22, 25 are independent claims.
3. In view of the appeal brief filed on 2/6/06, PROSECUTION IS HEREBY REOPENED. A new ground of rejection set forth below.

To avoid abandonment of the application, appellant must exercise one of the following two options:

(1) file a reply under 37 CFR 1.111 (if this Office action is non-final) or a reply under 37 CFR 1.113 (if this Office action is final); or,

(2) initiate a new appeal by filing a notice of appeal under 37 CFR 41.31 followed by an appeal brief under 37 CFR 41.37. The previously paid notice of appeal fee and appeal brief fee can be applied to the new appeal. If, however, the appeal fees set forth in 37 CFR 41.20 have been increased since they were previously paid, then appellant must pay the difference between the increased fees and the amount previously paid.

A Supervisory Patent Examiner (SPE) has approved of reopening prosecution by signing below:


STEPHEN HONG
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

4. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

5. Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Regarding independent claim 16, it is not clear the relation between a user computer system data with a given information unit. The preamble introduces a method for associating a chosen information unit with a given information unit. However, the *given information unit* as well as how such association occurs are not mentioned *in the claimed limitations*.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to

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consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

8. Claims 1-3, 8-9, 13-14, 17-22, 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Skopp et al. (US Pat No. 6,256,739, 7/3/01, filed 11/26/97) in view of Broder et al. (US Pat No. 6,037,135, 6/6/00, filed 3/10/98) and Cooper et al. (US Pat No. 6,101,503, 8/8/00, filed 3/2/98).

Regarding independent claim 1, Skopp discloses:

- automatically determining a content data of the given information unit by searching the given information unit, (col 5, lines 26-35, 58-67: providing a web page associated with the selected advertisement implies that the content data of a Web page, which is a given information unit, is automatically determined to find out the relation between a related web page and a selected advertisement)
- automatically selecting the chosen information unit as a function of the content data of the given information unit (col 5, lines 26-35, 58-67: selecting an advertisement from the advertisement index to obtain an *associated* web page shows that the advertisement, which is equivalent to the chosen information unit, is selected based on function of the content data of the web page)

Skopp does not disclose:

- indexing the given information unit to produce the indexed data
- performing a relevancy ranking on the indexed data

Broder discloses indexing the web pages so that a user can search to locate pages having specific content of interest (col 3, lines 15-35). Broder further discloses ranking web pages according to their connectivity (col 5, line 52 to col 6, line 6).

Cooper discloses:

- performing a relevancy ranking on the indexed data (col 1, lines 13-28: "... *First, the data to be searched must be input to the search system for indexing. Next, attributes and/or content are extracted from the objects and processed to create an index. An index consists of data that is used by the search system to process queries and identify relevant objects....The search system processes the query using the index data for the database and a suitable similarity ranking algorithm, and returns a hit-list of topically relevant objects. The user then select relevant objects from the hit-list for viewing and processing.*").

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to have modified Cooper, which is a general method for searching any type of data using indexed data and similarity ranking algorithm, to apply for searching and selecting advertisements and associated web pages, which are equivalent to the candidate information unit and the given information unit as claimed.

Also, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to have combined Cooper into Skopp and Broder since Cooper discloses performing a relevancy ranking on the indexed data, which can be any type of data providing the advantage to incorporate said relevancy ranking for relevant ranking web page indexed data in Skopp and Broder for rapidly searching of a related web page

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in the web page database related to a selected advertisement by considering only the Web pages of highest relevant ranking in the web page index.

Regarding independent claim 2, Skopp discloses:

- determining a content data of the candidate information unit (col 5, lines 58-67: displaying the advertisement index to user implies that the content of the advertisements are determined via indexing)
- automatically determining a content data of the given information unit by searching the given information unit (col 5, lines 26-35: the fact that when user selects an advertisement to automatically access to the Internet, the web page associated with the selected advertisement would be displayed or a list of related web pages would be displayed for viewing implies that the content data of the associated web page, which is equivalent to a given information unit, is determined to be matched the selected advertisement)
- comparing the content data of the given information unit to the content data of the candidate information unit (col 5, lines 26-35: the fact that an associated web page is rendered to be displayed with the selected advertisement implies that the content of the advertisement, which is equivalent to the candidate information unit, is compared with the content of the associated web page, which is equivalent to the given information unit, to have the relation between them)
- selecting the candidate information unit for linking to the given information unit as a function of said step of comparing the content data of the given information unit

to the content data of the candidate information unit (col 5, lines 58-67: selecting an advertisement from the advertisement index and obtaining a web page associated with that advertisement implies that a comparison of the content between the web page and the advertisement is performed to establish a linking between them by the system)

Skopp does not disclose:

- indexing the given information unit to produce the indexed data
- performing a relevancy ranking on the indexed data
- comparing the ranked index data of the given information unit to the content data of the candidate information unit
- selecting the candidate information unit for linking to the given information unit as a function of said comparing the ranked index data of the given information unit to the content data of the candidate information unit
- performing a relevancy ranking on the indexed data

Broder discloses indexing the web pages so that a user can search to locate pages having specific content of interest (col 3, lines 15-35). Broder further discloses ranking web pages according to their connectivity (col 5, line 52 to col 6, line 6).

Cooper discloses:

- performing a relevancy ranking on the indexed data (col 1, lines 13-28: "... *First, the data to be searched must be input to the search system for indexing. Next, attributes and/or content are extracted from the objects and processed to create an index. An index consists of data that is used by the search system to process*

queries and identify relevant objects....The search system processes the query using the index data for the database and a suitable similarity ranking algorithm, and returns a hit-list of topically relevant objects. The user then select relevant objects from the hit-list for viewing and processing.”)

- comparing the ranked index data of the one type of information unit to the content data of the other type information unit (col 1, lines 13-28: the return of a hit-list of topically relevant objects in response to the topic in the query using the index data and a suitable similarity ranking algorithm implies that the content data of the other type of information unit in the query is compared to the ranked index data of the one type of information unit)
- selecting the other type of information unit for linking to the one type of information unit as a function of said comparing the ranked index data of the one type of information unit to the content data of the other type of information unit (col 1, lines 13-28: “... *First, the data to be searched must be input to the search system for indexing. Next, attributes and/or content are extracted from the objects and processed to create an index. An index consists of data that is used by the search system to process queries and identify relevant objects....The search system processes the query using the index data for the database and a suitable similarity ranking algorithm, and returns a hit-list of topically relevant objects. The user then select relevant objects from the hit-list for viewing and processing.”)*

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to have modified Cooper, which is a general method for searching any type of data using indexed data and similarity ranking algorithm, to apply for searching and selecting advertisements and associated web pages, which are equivalent to the given information unit and the candidate information unit as claimed.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to have combined Cooper into Skopp and Broder since Cooper discloses performing a relevancy ranking on the indexed data, which can be any type of data providing the advantage to incorporate said relevancy ranking for relevant ranking web page indexed data in Skopp and Broder for rapidly searching of a related web page in the web page database related to a selected advertisement by considering only the Web pages of highest relevant ranking in the web page index.

Regarding to independent claim 3, claim 3 includes all the limitations of claim 2 and so is rejected under the same rationale, except in claim 3 the *step comparing is carried out automatically*. As mentioned above, comparing step is inherently included in automatically providing an associated web page to a selected advertisement where their contents are related to each other. The comparing step, thus, is also done automatically.

Regarding claim 8, which is dependent on claim 3, Skopp discloses that determining the content data of the candidate information unit includes:

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- collecting the content data of the candidate information unit (col 5, lines 26-35: the selected advertisement is used to retrieve the associated web page to be displayed implies that the content of the selected advertisement, which is equivalent to the candidate information, is collected)
- incorporating the content data into the candidate information unit (col 5, lines 26-35: associating the web page with the selected advertisement shows said incorporating)
- storing the candidate information unit and the content data of the candidate information unit (col 5, lines 58-67: the advertisement index is displayed to user implies that the advertisements, which is equivalent to the candidate information is stored in memory)

Regarding claim 9, which is dependent on claim 3, the claimed limitations of the claim is the same as in claim 8, except using the word "linking" instead of "incorporating" in "linking the content data into the candidate information unit"

Since "linking the content data to the candidate information unit" has the same meaning as "incorporating the content data to the candidate information unit" where the content data is included to the candidate information unit, claim 9 discloses the same subject matter as in claim 8.

Claim 9, therefore, is rejected under the same rationale.

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Regarding claims 13-14, which are dependent on claim 3, Skopp discloses that the given information is available on the Internet, the given information includes a page of content on the World Wide Web, and the candidate information unit includes an advertisement to be displayed to a user (col 5, lines 26 to col 6, line 3).

Regarding claim 17, which is dependent on claim 3, Skopp discloses:

- accessing a user computer system through a user Internet connection (figure 1A)
- querying the user computer system to determine a user computer system data (col 5, lines 26-35: a user at the PC 200 requests a Web page)
- returning the computer system data through the user Internet connection (col 5, lines 26-35: a requested web page from the Internet is displayed to a user)

Regarding claim 18, which is dependent on claim 3, Skopp discloses that the given information unit includes a user-input information (col 5, lines 26-35: since a user has to make a request for a web page, the user has to input some information relating to a web page in the request).

Regarding claim 19, which is dependent on claim 14, Skopp discloses:

- obtaining a user-input information (col 5, lines 26-35, the user input information for a web page is obtained in the user request)

Independent claims 20-22 are for a storage medium of method claims 1-3, and therefore are rejected under the same rationale.

Regarding independent claim 25, Skopp discloses:

- a server (figures 4, 5)
- a given information unit (figures 4, 5: Web proxy cache for storing web pages)
- a candidate information unit coupled to said server and given information unit (figure 5 and col 5, lines 58-67: the client access control application which can display an index of advertisements, which is equivalent to the candidate information is coupled to the server and the web proxy cache)

where the server adapted to:

- determine a content data of the candidate information unit (col 5, lines 26-35, 58-67: providing a web page associated with the selected advertisement implies that the content data of an advertisement, which is a candidate information unit, is determined to be matched the related web page)
- automatically determine a content data of the given information unit (col 5, lines 26-35, 58-67: providing a web page associated with the selected advertisement implies that the content data of a Web page, which is a given information unit, is automatically determined to find out the relation between a related web page and a selected advertisement)
- automatically compare the content data of the given information unit to the content data of the candidate information unit to create a comparison result (col

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5, lines 26-35, 58-67: providing a web page associated with the selected advertisement implies that data between the associated web page and the selected advertisement should be compared to select said web page related to the selected advertisement)

- link the candidate information to the given information unit as a function of the comparison result (col 5, lines 26-35, 58-67)

Skopp does not disclose that:

- said automatically determining is performed by searching the given information unit, indexing the given information unit to produce indexed data, and performing a relevancy ranking on the indexed data
- the chosen information unit is selected as a function of the relevancy ranking on the indexed data
- automatically comparing the ranked index data instead of comparing the content data as above

Broder discloses indexing the web pages so that a user can search to locate pages having specific content of interest (col 3, lines 15-35). Broder further discloses ranking web pages according to their connectivity (col 5, line 52 to col 6, line 6).

Cooper discloses:

- performing a relevancy ranking on the indexed data (col 1, lines 13-28: "... *First, the data to be searched must be input to the search system for indexing. Next, attributes and/or content are extracted from the objects and processed to create an index. An index consists of data that is used by the search system to process*

queries and identify relevant objects....The search system processes the query using the index data for the database and a suitable similarity ranking algorithm, and returns a hit-list of topically relevant objects. The user then select relevant objects from the hit-list for viewing and processing.”)

- comparing the ranked index data of one type of information unit to the content data of another type information unit to find out the relation between them (col 1, lines 13-28: the return of a hit-list of topically relevant objects in response to the topic in the query using the index data and a suitable similarity ranking algorithm implies that the content data of the other type of information unit in the query is compared to the ranked index data of the one type of information)
- selecting the other type of information unit for linking to the information unit as a function of said comparing the ranked index data of the information unit to the content data of the other type of information unit (col 1, lines 13-28: “... First, the data to be searched must be input to the search system for indexing. Next, attributes and/or content are extracted from the objects and processed to create an index. An index consists of data that is used by the search system to process queries and identify relevant objects....The search system processes the query using the index data for the database and a suitable similarity ranking algorithm, and returns a hit-list of topically relevant objects. The user then select relevant objects from the hit-list for viewing and processing.”)

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to have modified Cooper, which is a general method for searching any type

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of data using indexed data and similarity ranking algorithm, to apply for searching and selecting advertisements and associated web pages, which are equivalent to the candidate information unit and the given information unit as claimed.

Also, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to have combined Cooper into Skopp and Broder since Cooper discloses performing a relevancy ranking on the indexed data, which can be any type of data providing the advantage to incorporate said relevancy ranking for relevant ranking web page indexed data in Skopp and Broder for rapidly searching of a related web page in the web page database related to a selected advertisement by considering only the Web pages of highest relevant ranking in the web page index.

9. Claims 4-7, 23-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Skopp, Broder and Cooper as applied to claim 3 above, and further in view of Markowitz et al. (US Pat No. 6,311,185 B1, 10/20/01, filed 10/30/97).

Regarding claims 4 and 7, which are dependent on claims 3 and 4 respectively, Skopp discloses the given information unit is available on the Internet (col 5, lines 26-35).

Skopp and Cooper do not disclose placing the candidate information unit in a look-up tree according to the content data of the candidate information.

Markowitz discloses placing the candidate information unit in a *look-up tree* according to the content data of the candidate information (figure 3, #320 database look-up and #330 select advertisement from database imply that the candidate information unit, which is

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an advertisement, is placed in a *look-up database* according to the content data of the candidate information so that an related advertisement to a web page can be selected to incorporate to the web page; in addition, it was well known that any database is organized *in a hierarchy format, or a tree format*).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to have combined Markovitz into Skopp and Cooper since Markovitz discloses using a look-up tree for placing the candidate information unit thus motivating to incorporate into Skopp and Cooper for organizing given data for easily retrieving later.

Regarding claim 5, which is dependent on claim 4, Skopp and Cooper do not disclose automatically comparing the content data of the given information unit to the content data of the candidate information unit comprises traversing the look-up tree.

Markowitz discloses that automatically comparing the content data of the given information unit to the content data of the candidate information unit comprises traversing the look-up tree (figure 3, #320 database lookup and #330 select advertisement from database, show the traversing the look-up tree since a database is organized as a tree structure, and lookup a database implies traversing that database; col 4, lines 7-18, the advertisement selected from database that relates to a web page shows that the content of the advertisement and the content of the web page are compared to find out their relationship).

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It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to have combined Markovitz into Skopp and Cooper for the following reason. Markovitz discloses traversing the look-up tree when comparing content of the given information unit and content of the candidate information unit providing the advantage to incorporate into Skopp and Cooper to perform comparing without missing data by going through all of the obtained data in the look-up tree.

Regarding claim 6, which is dependent on claim 4, Skopp and Cooper do not disclose that the structure of the look-up tree includes the content data of the candidate information.

Markowitz discloses that the structure of the look-up tree includes the content data of the candidate information (figure 3, #320, #330; col 4, lines 7-18, the database should include the content data of the candidate information so that the comparing is performed to select advertisement from the database).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to have combined Markovitz into Skopp and Cooper for having the look-up tree that includes contents of the obtained information well organized according to its structure.

Regarding claim 23, which is dependent on claim 4, Skopp discloses that the candidate information unit includes an advertisement to be displayed to a user (col 5, line 58 to col 6, line 3).

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Regarding claim 24, which is dependent on claim 4, Skopp and Cooper do not explicitly disclose that the look-up tree includes at least one folder and at least one sub-folder. Markowitz discloses the structure of the look-up tree including the content data of the candidate information (figure 3, #320, #330; col 4, lines 7-18, the database should include the content data of the candidate information so that the comparing is performed to select advertisement from the database).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to have modified Markovitz to include at least one folder and at least one sub-folder since it was well known that any tree is organized in a hierarchy structure. Also, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to have combined Markovitz into Skopp and Cooper for obtaining a good place for storing data in an organized way that facilitates the data retrieving later.

10. Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Skopp, Broder and Cooper as applied to claim 3 above, and further in view of Yu (US Pat No. 6,067,552, 5/23/00, filed 3/30/98, priority 8/21/95).

Regarding claim 15, which is dependent on claim 3, Skopp and Cooper do not disclose that determining a content data of the given information unit further includes:

- selecting a keyword
- counting a number of occurrences of the key word
- ranking the key word according to the number of occurrences of the keyword

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Yu discloses:

- counting a number of occurrences of the key word (col 3, lines 43-58, ...the number of times a keyword appears in the content of the document....)
- ranking the key word according to the number of occurrences of the keyword (col 4, lines 23-63, ...setting a weighted relevancy ranking of each descriptive index term...)

Yu does not disclose explicitly selecting a keyword. However, the counting of a number of occurrences of the keyword in Yu shows that the keyword is selected for occurrence counting.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to have combined Yu into Skopp and Cooper for fast rendering the related data from a database using the ranking of keywords in a document.

11. Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Skopp et al. (US Pat No. 6,256,739, 7/3/01, filed 11/26/97).

Regarding independent claim 16, Skopp discloses:

- automatically determining a user computer system data (col 5, lines 26-35: a web page, which is a user computer system data, is determined to select to be associated with a selected advertisement)
- selecting a chosen information unit as a function of the user computer system data (col 1, lines 32-42; col 2, lines 60 to col 3, lines 1-18; figure 3, #320-#340)
- selecting an appropriate advertisement to incorporate to a web page)

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Skopp does not disclose explicitly that said determining is performed by running a diagnostic program on the user computer system to determine at least one of a component coupled in said computer system and a software program loaded on said user computer system.

However, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to have modified Skopp to specify that the determining step is done by running a diagnostic program on the user computer system to determine at least one of a component coupled in said computer system and a software program loaded on said user computer system since it was well known that any computer system includes such a diagnostic program for recognizing a component coupled to the computer system, and any software that a user would like to use has to be loaded on the computer system.

Conclusion

12. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Gill et al. (US Pat No. 6,052,514, 4/18/00, filed 1/18/95).

Peckover (US Pat No. 6,119,101, 9/12/00, filed 1/17/97).

Byrd et al. (US Pat No. 6,185,553, 2/6/01, filed 4/15/98).

Braden-Harder et al. (US Pat No. 5,933,822, 8/3/99, filed 7/22/97).

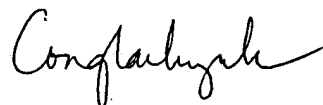
Ballard (US Pat No. 6,182,050, 1/30/01, filed 5/28/98).

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13. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Cong-Lac Huynh whose telephone number is 571-272-4125. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri (8:30-6:00).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Stephen Hong can be reached on 571-272-4124. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Cong-Lac Huynh
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2178
04/12/06